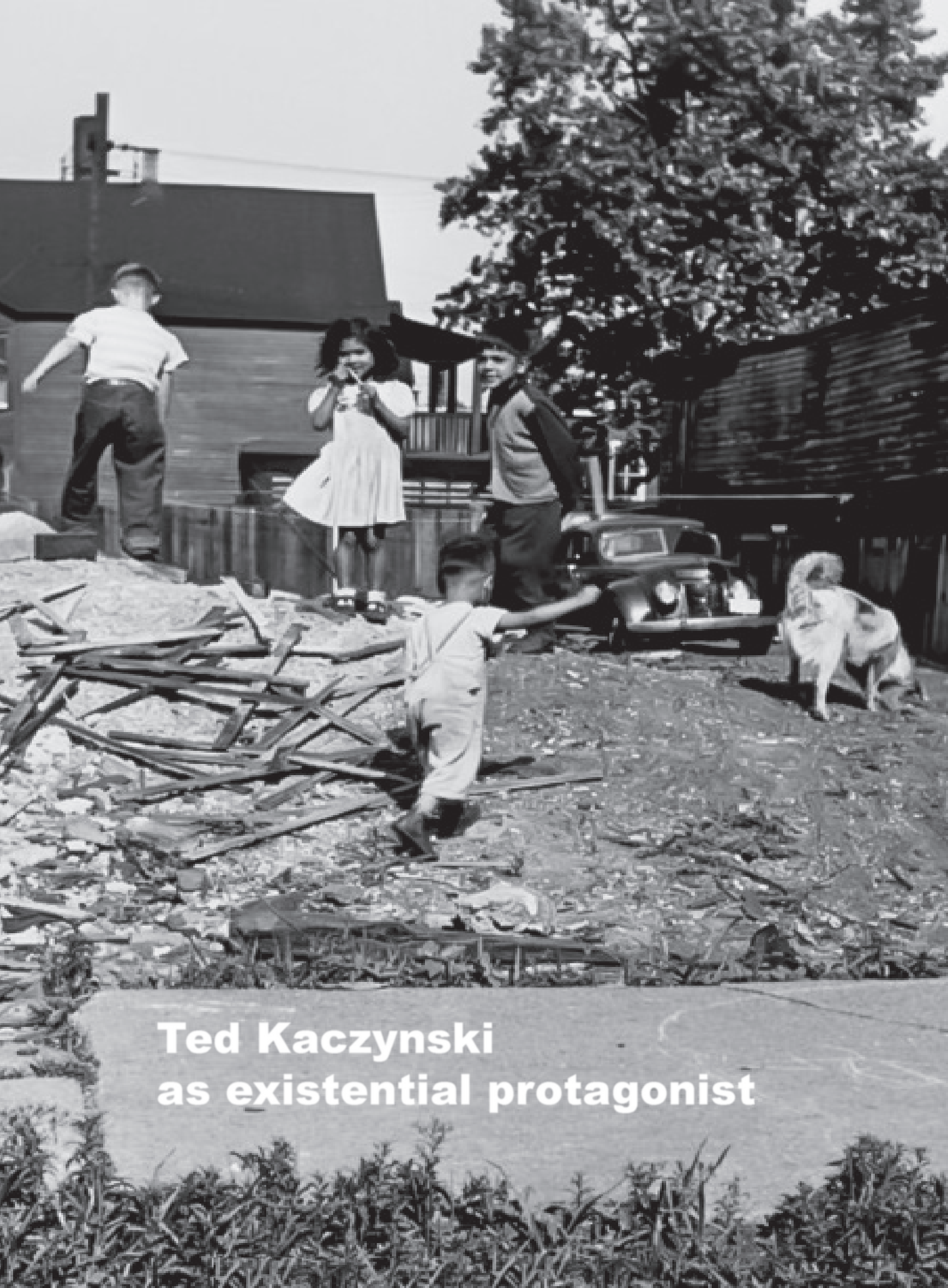
how to become who you are



Ted Kaczynski as existential protagonist

EXISTENCE

1942: Ted Kaczynski is born to Polish-American parents on the Southside of Chicago, a dingy working-class Polish neighborhood near the stockyards, one step above the slums. His father makes sausages.

My first vague memories are of a golden age of blessed irresponsibility. I remember I was very happy being carried on my father's shoulders on a Sunday morning with bright light coming in the front windows.

When I was very little, 3 or 4, I was very concerned over the fact that when my mother bought me an ice cream cone, I was always afraid to take it directly from the lady's hand. My mother had to take it from her and hand it to me. Eventually I overcame this by forcing myself to take it directly.

After a few times it was easy.

This accompanies *Jokes About Bombs Will Not be Taken Lightly* (Goswell Road, 2025)
Contact Lydia Eccles, UniversalAliens@Hotmail.com / website: UniversalAliens.com

ABSURDITY

My parents, though of Catholic backgrounds, are atheists, and fortunately never taught me to believe in God. My parents had indoctrinated me so thoroughly with basic moral precepts that I adhered to them very strictly. When I was 5-years old I told a lie.

For some reason my mother's reprimand stung more than usual, and I promised I would never tell another lie.There was a period during which my special pride and joy was the fact that I was a "good boy." I preened myself on it.

One day, while thinking about morals, it occurred to me that there was no logical reason for being good, unless personal advantage. But to be good solely for personal advantage is not a moral act. Thinking about this further, I came to the realization that a value-judgment can never be deduced from the facts. I went and told my mother my conclusion. She refused to accept it, and gave naive answers that I saw through immediately. I argued with her only briefly, because I knew she had a fixed idea that would never change, and it was perfectly clear to me that I was right. It was already becoming evident to me that I could think more clearly than my parents or the adults that I knew.

I decided I would make the choice of being good—just for the sake of being good. However, I felt crestfallen about the fact that there was no logical justification for morality. After that I usually did not feel any special pride about being a good boy.

I have always had a strong tendency to admit an unpleasant truth to myself, rather than trying to push it away with self-deception or rationalization.

ALIENATION

When Ted is ten-years old, his family moves to Evergreen Park, a suburb of Chicago, where the Kaczynskis earn less money than most. Ted enters 5th grade. Then he scores 167 on an IQ test.

I had the misfortune to fall into the hands of a "guidance councellor." As a matter of routine I was given certain tests, and because my scores were very high, I was given a fairly elaborate IQ test. She phoned my parents and told them I had the potential to be another Einstein and blah blah blah.

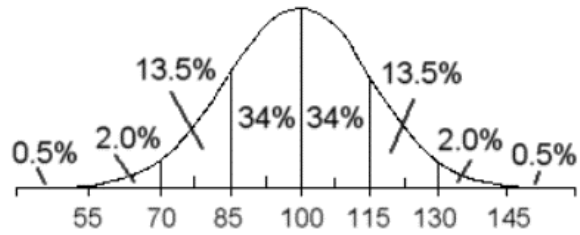
Little did she know my mother was all too ready to receive such information with excessive enthusiasm, because it coincided with her fondest dreams. She immediately called up some of our relatives to brag about the news, which I thought was in bad taste, and said to me, "Miss Frye said we're not supposed to tell you—but we feel we can treat you as an adult." That line, "We feel we can treat you as an adult," is something I heard often from my parents in the following years.

Ted is pushed from 5th grade up to 7th grade, making him younger and smaller than his classmates.

Once I was in the 7th grade, I quickly slid to the bottom of the pecking order. Jealousy was probably roused by the fact that I was supposed to be vastly smarter than them. My shyness in a new situation may have been interpreted as coldness or a superior air. I was subject to a good deal of verbal abuse and teasing from the other boys. I became thoroughly cowed and stayed that way all through high school. I was afraid to defend myself when insulted or abused. I simply ignored the insults as best I could. It had nothing to do with lack of physical courage. It was psychological—connected with dominance relationships.

His parents accuse him of being abnormal for not socializing with other kids. After the birth of David, 7 years younger, Ted's mother turns irritable, targeting him with frequent outbursts of rage. He is supposed to be "the perfect little genius." Ted's father becomes cold and sneering, passive, morose.

When I was small, family entertainments often involved my father playing the piano, games, and stuff like that. In my teens, we all just sat squalidly in front of the television set, shovelling junk fook into our mouths. My mother was continually shouting, scolding, insulting and blaming for me for whatever went wrong. What earned my bitterness was the nature of the insults my parents would throw at me. Names they would call me: sick, emotionally disturbed, creep, or another Walter T. (Walter T. was a man we knew who ended up in a mental institution).



AUTHENTICITY

While adults map out his fate as a scientific genius, Ted is reading *Robinson Crusoe*, *Treasure Island, The Three Muskateers*, Jack London's books, privately discovering his own desire.

I dreamed of escaping from civilization—going to live on an uninhabited island or some other wild place.

I read anthropology books about the Neanderthal man and the way they lived. I asked myself why I wanted to read more of this material. It dawned on me that what I really wanted was not to read more, but to actually live that way.

I was already beginning to take a dim view of progress and the future of society. I felt we were heading toward an "ant-hill" society in which there would be no more individual freedom.

WILL

In high school I was often subjected to insults or other indignities by the dominant boys. Not daring to fight back, and not wishing to show weakness, my only choice in the face of hostility was to be cold and stoical. After finishing 10th grade, I was put into 12th grade. I came out of high school with my social self-confidence crushed.

One summer when I was 15 or 16, in one of the prairies that still remained then, I threw a clod of earth at a bird. It "froze", and I walked up to it and just picked it up. As soon as I had it in my hand it began to struggle violently. I held it in my hand for some time, and I soon began to experience warm, affectionate, pitying feelings for it. I had hoped to kill it as an act of hunting, in accord with my fantasies of a primitive life. But now I was turning soft. I thought, "How can I ever hope to experience a cave-man style life if I am too soft-hearted to kill game? For that kind of life I will have to be hard." So I forced myself to kill the bird by crushing it in my hand. I left the place feeling sick with pity for the unfortunate creature.

Ted is pressured by his high school guidance counselor and parents into applying to Harvard University; he enters at age 16. He is drawn to mathematics because he finds it most difficult. He studies with world-class mathematician John Thompson and falls in love with pure—not applied—mathematics.

At first I felt myself under an obligation to try to make friends, because my parents had criticized me for not being more social. But I didn't fit in with the prep-school types by whom I was surrounded. They never invited me to go anywhere with them or do anything with them. I kept to myself.

I have never been able to fully understand just what the externally visible traits of mine are that have always caused me to be marked out as different.

I actually didn't give a fuck about whether I got into Harvard, but I had to pretend to be interested so as not to shock my parents. My most persistant fantasy was to live, at least temprarily, a savage life completely independent of organized society.
But I hadn't the least idea of how to get what I wanted.

It was my mother's craving for status that was behind the big push to get me into Harvard. I went because my parents expected it and I didn't know what else to do.
But once I got there it was a tremendous thing for me. I was under tremendous pressure and tension, but I thrived on it. I forced myself to keep studying long after I should have gone to sleep. I considered myself negligent if I went to bed before 2 AM.
Feeling the strength of my own will, I became enthusiastic about will power.

I think that when the average person is doing nothing, his mind tends to wander more-or-less at random. This can happen to me too; but I have a strong tendency to settle instead on a particular subject, and think about it intently, turning it over and over in my mind and examining it from all angles. Once I get involved in a problem, whether in working with my mind or with my hands, even if that problem was of no great interest to me at the beginning, I have a tendency to become quite concerned with it and devote great care and attention to it.

DESPAIR

Ted goes to UMichigan to earn his master's and Ph.D. in mathematics. He finds the teaching careless, sloppy.

My morale began to slide rapidly downhill. What was I doing with all the time I was supposed to be spending on my coursework? I spent it on research problems of my own devising. By the fourth year I was deeply demoralized, discouraged and bitter. Mathematics—even at it's best—was only a game.

My desire for wilderness life independent of civilization grew stronger than ever. Trouble is, I didn't know how to go about it; and it was extremely difficult to work up the nerve to cut loose from my civilized moorings and take off to the woods.

Sometimes we don't know how much the choices we make are governed by the expectations of people around us. Furthermore, I didn't know where to go.

I felt trapped in my pattern of life; I felt I lacked the social courage. I had no sexual or social relationships to provide any consolation for my fundamental dissatisfaction with life in modern society. Life began to seem completely empty. I felt I had nothing to look forward to or to live for. To quote Joseph Conrad's ***Heart of Darkness****, "I had to deal with a being to whom I could not appeal in the name of anything high or low... There was nothing either above or below him... He had kicked himself loose of the earth... He was alone."*

Ted makes an abortive visit to a psychiatrist. He has second thoughts when he arrives for the appointment, so he lies that he is anxious about the draft.

Then came a major turning point in my life. Like a phoenix I rose from the ashes of my despair to a glorious new hope. (I ask the reader to pardon the melodramatic language. When I write like that it is with a slight grin.) I wanted to kill that psychiatrist. Because the future looked utterly empty to me.

So I said to myself, why not really kill that psychiatrist? What is important is not the words that ran through my mind, but the way I felt about them. What was entirely new was the fact that I really felt I <u>could</u> kill someone. My very hopelessness had liberated me. Because I no longer cared about death. I no longer cared about consequences.

I suddenly felt that I really could break out of my rut in life and do things that were daring, irresponsible or criminal. Then I thought, well, as long as I am going to throw everything up anyway, instead of having to shoot it out with the cops, I will do what I've always wanted to do.

I will go up to Canada, take off into the woods with a rifle, and try to live off the country. If that doesn't work out, and if I can get back to civilization before I starve, then I'll come back and kill someone I hate.

What was new was that I now felt I really had the courage to behave irresponsibly. All these thoughts passed through my head in the length of time it took me to walk a quarter of a mile. I had acquired bright new hope, an angry, vicious kind of determination and high morale.

LIBERATION

I promptly embarked on a conscientious program of physical conditioning and made a new vigorous effort in learning to recognize edible wild plants. I had no social life at this time and I made it a principle to be both asocial and amoral.

What I had acquired was strength and hopefulness to be liberated from my conditioned inhibitions against defying authority overtly.

Ted accepts a tenure-track assistant professorship at University of California Berkeley for the sole reason of earning enough money to buy wilderness land. He reads widely in anticipation of the leap and develops his social critique.

My reading centered around true accounts of the adventures of explorers, frontiersmen, Indians.

I found it necessary to begin disciplining myself to avoid reading newspapers, except just occasionally, because if I read the newspapers regularly I would build up too much tense, frustrated anger.

Five examples of just a few of the things that I resented:
That my life depended on the decisions of dictators and politicians who had atom bombs at their disposal; boosters in the political and business worlds who pushed economic and population growth, thereby increasing air pollution, noise, over-crowding, and destruction of such wilderness as remained; scientists and engineers whose discoveries and inventions encouraged economic growth and population growth by increasing food supply, and increased the power of society to control individuals by either physical or psychological means; groups that pushed collectivist ideologies, which I feared might change society in such a way as to restrict my personal autonomy even further...

Here is where my one great weakness—my social weakness—interfered. I was too self-conscious. I feared people would think me foolish or peculiar if they knew I proposed to go off into the woods for 2 weeks alone; and still more so if they knew I wanted to live as a hermit.

Thus, I had a great social problem in trying to bridge the gap between civilization and wilderness.

REVALUATION OF VALUES

Ted resigns from Berkeley at the end of his second year and buys 1.4 acres in a remote area near Lincoln, Montana. He builds a small cabin, with no electricity or running water, to begin the project of learning self-reliance skills and living in solitude and freedom. He hunts, gathers, gardens, explores the wilderness on expeditions of up to six weeks at a time. His heart softens.

I had a supper of which nothing was store-bought but a pinch of salt: a salad of yellow-monkey flower and brooklime; a stew of 3 squirrels, onion flowers, my own potatoes, and a small quantity of miscellaneous herbs, and huckleberries for desert.
A good meal! Today for lunch I had: salad, bread, oil, legs and back of grouse, and a quart of huckleberries. Yesterday, and again today, I ate a handful of the berries of red osier dogwood.

In city life you tend to be turned inward. In the woods your awareness is turned outward; you'll notice inconspicuous things on the ground, such as edible plants or animal tracks. If a human being has passed through and left even just a small part of a footprint, you'll probably notice it. You know the sounds that come to your ears: this is a birdcall, that is the buzzing of a horsefly, this is a startled deer running off, this is the thump of a pine cone that has been cut down by a squirrel and has landed on a log. If you hear a sound that you can't identify, it immediately catches your attention, even if it's so faint that it's barely audible.

If you don't have any work that needs to be done, you can sit for hours at a time just doing nothing, listening to the birds or the wind or the silence, watching the shadows move as the sun travels, or simply looking at familiar objects. And you don't get bored. You're just at peace.

Ted writes a proposal to create an anti-tech movement aiming to end all government funding for scientific research—to be a gradual revolution against industrial society. He mails it to environmentalists he has read, but never met: *"In these pages it is argued that continued scientific and technical progress will inevitably result in the extinction of individual liberty."*

After evaluating a variety of possible strategies to end technological progress he concludes: *"I propose that you join me and a few other people to whom I am writing in an attempt to found an organization dedicated to stopping federal aid to scientific research.You may be understandably reluctant to join an organization about which you know nothing, but you know as much about it as I do. It hasn't been started yet. You would be one of the founding members. I am only making the attempt because no better qualified person has yet done so. I am simply trying to bring together a few highly intelligent and thoughtful people who would be willing to take over the task.*
I would prefer to drop out of it personally because I am unsuited to that kind of work; in fact I dislike it intensely."

(The recruitment effort goes nowhere.)

IMPOSSIBILITY

This morning was very fresh and beautiful. But as I came around the hill north of the cabin, I heard the roar of some snowmobiles ahead, buzzing around and around. It's not that I'm shy about meeting people, but meeting people—especially people like that—upsets the sense of isolation from organized society. Just the noise by itself is distressing, and living out here in the winter it is impractical to keep one's clothes clean or shave regularly, so that I look like a tramp, and must be an object of curiosity, if not of amusement or suspicion, to these slicked and pampered snowmobilists. I went back a little way, then sat and brooded for awhile.

Ted writes to anarchist French philosopher Jacques Ellul. He has read his book, *The Technological Society*, six times. He lays out to Ellul his idea of a gradual revolution by de-funding scientific research:

"BUT, if the technological society were once destroyed, then anything might become possible, such as recovery of human values, individual autonomy, or anything else. In your terminology, history would become unblocked. The goal (attainable or not) of the proposal under consideration is a gradual rather than an explosive disintegration of the technological society."

Over the next five years, civilization inexorably closes in upon him: logging, mining, new-built roads, motorcycles, recreational vehicles, snowmobiles and trailers, planes passing loudly overhead on new flight patterns.
On each expedition he discovers fresh destruction.

Until today, those ridge-tops were the one place where I felt secure from intrusion by this kind of garbage; this area was my last refuge. I was so terribly upset that if those cocksuckers had come into the meadow where I was I would have shot them.

I just don't know what to do or where to turn.

I can't just hole up in the cabin all the time, and there seems to be nowhere left where I can hunt or gather roots or berries without looking over my shoulder to see if the vile emissaries of civilization are about to break in on me.

As for returning permanently to civilization—I would rather die.

I never thought civilization would close in on me so quickly.

Where did they all come from so quickly?

REBELLION

Ted tests his nerve to commit small acts of vengeance, struggling with his humiliating fear of committing crimes—no physical threat scares him like the prospect of spending thirty days in jail for a petty crime.

A few miles from my cabin, on the south side of the ridge that runs east from here, Mine X had a large diesel engine mounted on the back of an old truck, apparently for running a large drill for boring holes in rock. I put a small quantity of sugar in the fuel tank of the diesel engine and also in the gas tank of the truck.

I broke into this trailer by unscrewing some screws and prying off a metal window frame, ruining it in the process. (I had a strong psychological inhibition against breaking the window, even though it's very unlikely anyone could have been within earshot.) I stole a few cans of food from the trailer.

After a few times it is easy.

Overcoming my earlier inhibition, I smashed most of the windows in the trailer, then reached inside with my rifle and smashed a Coleman lantern and two gas lamp fixtures. I put a generous amount of sugar in the diesel.

But within four more years of rapid development, Ted is tired; his struggle by sabotage is over.

I have been feeling ever since last fall that I have nothing left to hope for in life. My home country (as I now consider it) in Montana is being ruined gradually, and, while I might still be able to find wilder places, there is nowhere I could feel safe from civilization.

Life under the thumb of modern civilization seems worthless to measure and thus I more and more feel that life is coming to a dead-end for me and death begins to look attractive—it would mean peace.

There is just one thing that really makes me determined to cling to life for awhile and that is the desire for revenge. I want to kill some people, preferably including at least one scientist, businessman, or other bigshot.

Following that, I have a vague intention of taking to the woods—either in Montana or in some wilder place—and, from ambush, murdering snowmobilists, motorcyclists, outboard motor users, or the like; in the end shooting it out with the authorities and not permitting myself to be taken alive.

Ted crafts a bomb and returns with it to Chicago. He addresses the package to Buckley Crist, a professor of materials engineering he picks out of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute catalogue. Since the package is too big to fit in a mailbox, he places it in a parking lot near the science and technology buildings. A university police officer picks it up and suffers minor injuries.

ANGUISH

Lately I have been in contact with the Chairman of the local unit of Friends of the Earth with the idea of joining that organization—not because I think such organizations do any good, but because there might be a chance I could meet some people in that organization who would share my anti-technological views.

I still keep trying with faint hope of starting an anti-technological organization. Since I do well at most everything else, if it were not for my social disability I probably would have done well in attempting to start such an organization. Of course, the chances of success for such an organization are no doubt remote, but if there is any chance at all, I would seem to have lost it by my inability to be accepted by a group.

A month later Ted reads a governmental report on the political effectiveness of assassination. He excerpts it in his journal: *Page 4. "A second category is assassination for the purpose of terrorizing and destroying the legitimacy of the ruling elite in order to effect substantial systemic or ideological change. Such assassinations may be directed against high government officials or against mid-level officials to undermine the effectiveness of the central government at the local or provincial level. Our studies show that this kind of assassination is effective in achieving the long-range goals sought. Once a terrorist group is well-established, the only effective response is either counterterror or agreement to the basic demands of the terrorists."*

The above conclusions sound hopeful to me, because, if correct, they seem to suggest that a comparatively small group of people can change the course of history if sufficiently determined. But I wouldn't be too confident about this without examining the evidence on which they (the authors) base their conclusions.

Still, if only I could start an anti-technological terrorist group! Any kind of effective anti-technological group! But that would require meeting a lot of people, picking out the right ones, and filling them with enthusiasm for the idea; that is, it would require considerable social skill—and the social area is my one weak point.

Ted commits himself to begin a terrorist campaign next summer. In the meantime, he takes a temporary job to earn money. He likes the people he works with. Then they offer him a permanent job.

Yesterday, instead of going to work, I phoned in and said I was quitting. To tell the truth, I feel heartsick having had to turn down that job. When Joe offered me that job, in view of the nature of the job and what he said about it, his offer seemed to imply not only an appreciation of my ability, but also an acceptance of my personality. Thus, the biggest reason I feel so very badly about having to turn down the job is that I feel as if I have turned down an offer of friendship. It seems to me that working people are more tolerant of individual differences than intellectuals are. I have met far more personalities for whom I have some respect among the working people than among intellectuals or bourgeois types.

In quitting I feel as if I have signed my own death-warrant. Drifting along indefinitely in that job would have been the path of least resistance—and that, in a way, was the only thing remaining between me and the finish of everything. I am feeling so much grief and bitterness over it, that I conclude that the social rejection I've endured has cut much deeper than I formerly realized.

REVOLUTION

On May 9,1979 Ted begins a terror campaign. He places a bomb in a room at the Northwestern University Technological Institute; a graduate student is injured. He mails four more bombs by 1982; three of them cause injuries.

The FBI forms the Unabom Task Force.

The fifth of August I began a hike to the east. Walking across the hillsides on my way there, I saw down below me a new road that had not been there previously. This made me feel a little sick. Nevertheless, I went on to the plateau.

What I found there broke my heart. The plateau was criss-crossed with new roads, broad and well-made for roads of that kind. The plateau is ruined forever.

The only thing that could save it now would be the collapse of the technological society. I couldn't bear it.

On this day of 1983 Ted decides that rather than acquiring more wilderness skills, he will commit himself fully to attacking the system as a whole. He mails five bombs 1983-1987, injuring four and killing one person, a computer store owner. He claims the bombings in a 1985 letter to the San Francisco examiner:

"*The aim of the Freedom Club is the complete and permanent destruction of modern industrial society in every part of the world."*

The FBI chooses not to reveal this message to the public.

Ted takes a hiatus from 1987 to 1993 to design smaller, more powerful bombs. He then resumes with highly-targeted assassinations of prominent researchers and political actors, injuring a leading computer scientist(1) and injuring a genetic researcher(2); killing a public relations executive(3) and killing the president of the California logging industry lobby(4).

On the day he mails the last bomb—April 20, 1995—he sends a letter to The New York Times (implicitly, the FBI) offering to negotiate an agreement.

(1) David Gelernter: Yale University computer scientist; author of ***Mirror Worlds: Or: The Day Sotware Puts the Universe in a Shoebox... How It Will Happen and What it Will Mean.*** "Reality will be replaced gradually, piece by piece, by a software imitation; we will live inside the imitation; and the surprising thing is—this will be a great humanistic advance."
(2) Charles Epstein: Medical geneticist at University of California San Francisco. At the same time, Ted sent warning letters to Nobel-Prize-winning gene-splicing pioneers, Phillip Sharp and Richard Roberts. Roberts later developed and advocated global use of GMOs.
3) Thomas Mosser: Burson-Marsteller executive. Ted had read that B-M had defended Exxon after the 1989 Exxon Valdez spilled ten million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound. B-M had advised but not handled the account. B-M specialized in "reputation repair" for corporations and states causing catastrophic environmental harms or human rights abuses.
4) Gilbert Murray: President of the lumber lobby group, the California Forestry Association.

PERSONAL to

Warren Hoge
Assistant Managing Editor
New York Times
229 West 43d St.
New York, NY 10036

This is a message from the terrorist group FC. To prove its authenticity we give our identifying number (to be kept secret): 553-25-4394.

We blew up Thomas Mosser last December because he was a Burston-Marsteller executive. Among other misdeeds, Burston-Marsteller helped Exxon clean up its public image after the Exxon Valdez incident. But we attacked Burston-Marsteller less for its specific misdeeds than on general principles. Burston-Marsteller is about the biggest organization in the public relations field. This means that its business is the development of techniques for manipulating people's attitudes. It was for this more than for its actions in specific cases that we sent a bomb to an executive of this company.

Some news reports have made the misleading statement that we have been attacking universities or scholars. We have nothing against universities or scholars as such. All the university people whom we have attacked have been specialists in <u>technical fields</u>. (We consider certain areas of applied psychology, such as behavior modification, to be technical fields.) We would not want anyone to think that we have any desire to hurt professors who study archaeology, history, literature or harmless stuff like that. The people we are out to get are the scientists and engineers, especially in critical fields like computers and genetics. As for the bomb planted in the Business School at the U. of Utah, that was a botched operation. We won't say how or why it was botched because we don't want to give the FBI any clues. No one was hurt by that bomb.

In our previous letter to you we called ourselves anarchists. Since "anarchist" is a vague word that has been applied to a variety of attitudes, further explanation is needed. We call ourselves anarchists because we would like, ideally, to break down all society into very small, completely autonomous units. Regrettably, we don't see any clear road to this goal, so we leave it to the indefinite future. Our more immediate goal, which we think may be attainable at some time during the next several decades, is the destruction of the worldwide industrial system. Through our bombings we hope to promote social instability in industrial society, propagate anti-industrial ideas and give encouragement to those who hate the industrial system.

The FBI has tried to portray these bombings as the work of an isolated nut. We won't waste our time arguing about whether we are nuts, but we certainly are not isolated. For security reasons we won't reveal the number of members of our group, but anyone who will read the anarchist and radical environmentalist journals will see that opposition to the industrial-technological system is widespread and growing.

Why do we announce our goals only now, though we made our first bomb some seventeen years ago? Our early bombs were too ineffectual to attract much public attention or give encouragement to those who hate the system. We found by experience that gunpowder bombs, if small enough to be carried inconspicuously, were too feeble to do much damage, so we took a couple of years off to do some experimenting. We learned how to make pipe bombs that were powerful enough, and we used these in a couple of successful bombings as well as in some unsuccessful ones. Unfortunately we discovered that these bombs would not detonate <u>consistently</u> when made with three-quarter inch steel water pipe. They did seem to detonate consistently when made with massively reinforced one inch steel water pipe, but a bomb of this type made a long, heavy package, too conspicuous and suspicious looking for our liking.

So we went back to work, and after a long period of experimentation we developed a type of bomb that does not require a pipe, but is set off by a detonating cap that consists of a chlorate explosive packed into a piece of small diameter copper tubing. (The detonating cap is a miniature pipe bomb.) We used bombs of this type to blow up the genetic engineer Charles Epstein and the computer specialist David Gelernter. We did use a chlorate pipe bomb to blow up Thomas Mosser because we happened to have a piece of lightweight aluminum pipe that was just right for the job. The Gelernter and Epstein bombings were not fatal, but the Mosser bombing was fatal even though a smaller amount of explosive was used. We think this was because the type of fragmentation material that we used in the Mosser bombing is more effective than what we've used previously.

Since we no longer have to confine the explosive in a pipe, we are now

Unabomb Archives
FBI

free of limitations on the size and shape of our bombs. We are pretty sure we know how to increase the power of our explosives and reduce the number of batteries needed to set them off. And, as we've just indicated, we think we now have more effective fragmentation material. So we expect to be able to pack deadly bombs into ever smaller, lighter and more harmless looking packages. On the other hand, we believe we will be able to make bombs much bigger than any we've made before. With a briefcase-full or a suitcase-full of explosives we should be able to blow out the walls of substantial buildings.

Clearly we are in a position to do a great deal of damage. And it doesn't appear that the FBI is going to catch us any time soon. The FBI is a joke.

The people who are pushing all this growth and progress garbage deserve to be severely punished. But our goal is less to punish them than to propagate ideas. Anyhow we are getting tired of making bombs. It's no fun having to spend all your evenings and weekends preparing dangerous mixures, filing trigger mechanisms out of scraps of metal or searching the sierras for a place isolated enough to test a bomb. So we offer a bargain.

We have a long article, between 29,000 and 37,000 words, that we want to have published. If you can get it published according to our requirements we will permanently desist from terrorist activities. It must be published in the New York Times, Time or Newsweek, or in some other widely read, nationally distributed periodical. Because of its length we suppose it will have to be serialized. Alternatively, it can be published as a small book, but the book must be well publicized and made available at a moderate price in bookstores nationwide and in at least some places abroad. Whoever agrees to publish the material will have exclusive rights to reproduce it for a period of six months and will be welcome to any profits they may make from it. After six months from the first appearance of the article or book it must become public property, so that anyone can reproduce or publish it. (If material is serialized, first instalment becomes public property six months after appearance of first instalment, second instalment becomes public property six months after appearance of second instalment, etc.) We must have the right to publish in the New York Times, Time or Newsweek, each year for three years after the appearance of our article or book, three thousand words expanding or clarifying our material or rebutting criticisms of it.

The article will not explicitly advocate violence. There will be an unavoidable implication that we favor violence to the extent that it may be necessary, since we advocate eliminating industrial society and we ourselves have been using violence to that end. But the article will not advocate violence explicitly, nor will it propose the overthrow of the United States Government, nor will it contain obscenity or anything else that you would be likely to regard as unacceptable for publication.

How do you know that we will keep our promise to desist from terrorism if our conditions are met? It will be to our advantage to keep our promise. We want to win acceptance for certain ideas. If we break our promise people will lose respect for us and so will be less likely to accept the ideas.

Our offer to desist from terrorism is subject to three qualifications. First: Our promise to desist will not take effect until all parts of our article or book have appeared in print. Second: If the authorities should succeed in tracking us down and an attempt is made to arrest any of us, or even to question us in connection with the bombings, we reserve the right to use violence. Third: We distinguish between terrorism and sabotage. By terrorism we mean actions motivated by a desire to influence the development of a society and intended to cause injury or death to human beings. By sabotage we mean similarly motivated actions intended to destroy property without injuring human beings. The promise we offer is to desist from terrorism. We reserve the right to engage in sabotage.

It may be just as well that failure of our early bombs discouraged us from making any public statements at that time. We were very young then and our thinking was crude. Over the years we have given as much attention to the development of our ideas as to the development of bombs, and we now have some-

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page 3 not available.

P.S. Mr. Hoge, at this time we are sending letters to David Gelernter, Richard J. Roberts and Phillip A. Sharp, the last two being recent Nobel Prize winners. We are not putting our identifying number on these letters, because we want to keep it secret. Instead, we are advising Gelernter, Roberts and Sharp to contact you for confirmation that the letters do come from FC.

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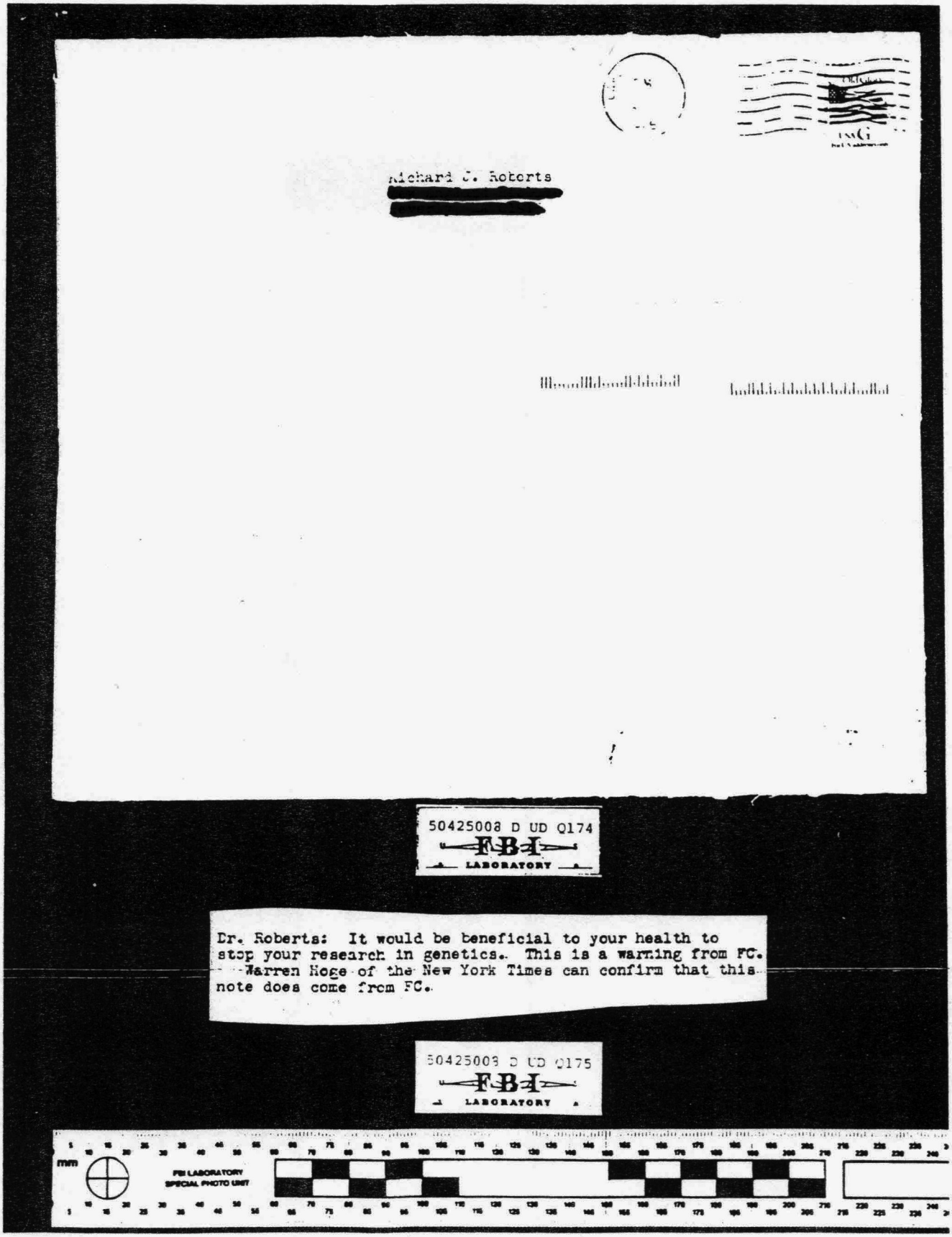

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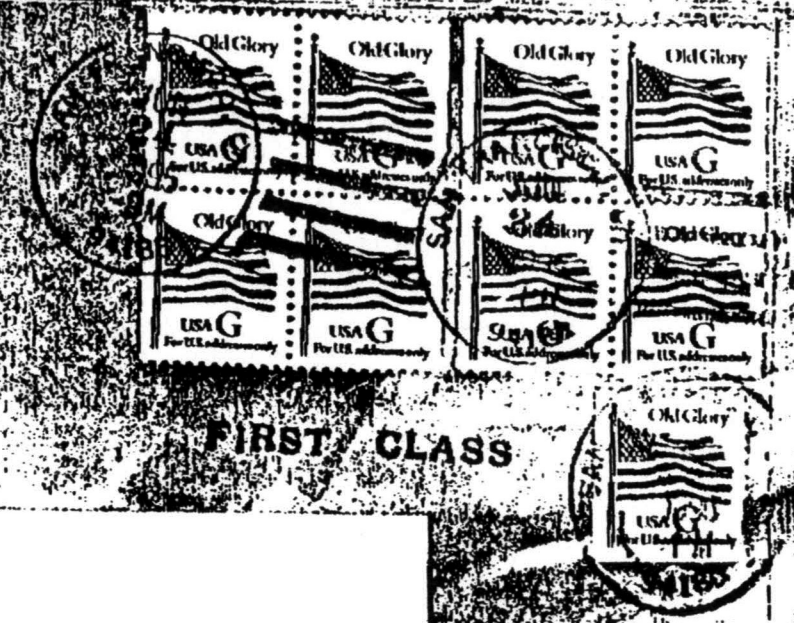
Davis, CA 95616



PERSONAL to

Warren Hoge, Assistant Managing Editor

New York Times

229 West 43d St.

New York, NY 10036

JUN-28-1995 21:58 FROM

New York Times:
This is a message from FC,

If the enclosed manuscript is published reasonably soon and receives wide public exposure, we will permanently desist from terrorism in accord with the agreement that we proposed in our last letter to you.

In that letter we stated that whoever agreed to publish the manuscript was to have exclusive rights to it for six months, after which the material was to become public property. We are willing to be flexible about the six month limit. The reason we offered exclusive rights (temporarily) was to provide an incentive for publication of the manuscript. Presumably, whoever published it would hope to profit by doing so. We assume that the six month limit should be ample if the material is published in a periodical, but if it is published in book form we ~~xxxx~~ don't know how long the publisher would need exclusive rights in order to have a reasonable expectation of making a profit. So if the NY Times arranges for publication in book form, we leave the period of exclusive rights to your discretion. But it should be no longer than necessary and in any case must not exceed one year, unless you publish in the Times ~~xx~~ good and convincing reasons for making it longer than that. We don't want our material to remain locked up by a copyright, especially if it is published in the form of a book and the book doesn't sell.

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Contrary to what the FBI has suggested, our bombing at the California Forestry Association was in no way inspired by the Oklahoma City bombing. We strongly deplore the kind of indiscriminate slaughter that occurred in the Oklahoma City event. We have no regret about the fact that our bomb blew up the "wrong" man, Gilbert Murray, instead of William N. Dennison, to whom it was addressed. Though Murray did not have Dennison's inflammatory style he was pursuing the same goals, and he was probably pursuing them more effectively because of the very fact that he was not inflammatory.

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June 28, 1995

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A letter from an anarchist to the editors of the NY Times made us realize that we owe an apology to the radical environmentalist and nonviolent anarchist movements. Statements we made in our letters to the NY Times would tend to associate us with anarchism and radical environmentalism and therefore might make the public think of anarchists and radical environmentalists as terrorists. So we want to make it clear that there is a NONVIOLENT anarchist movement that probably includes most people in America today who would describe themselves as anarchists. It's a safe bet that practically all of them strongly disapprove of our bombings. Many radical environmentalists do engage in sabotage, but the overwhelming majority of them are opposed to violence against human beings. We know of no case in which a radical environmentalist has intentionally injured a human being. (There was one injury due to a tree spiking incident, but the spiking was probably intended only to damage equipment, not injure people.)

We decided to call ourselves anarchists not in order to associate ourselves with any particular anarchist group or movement but only because we felt we needed some label to apply to ourselves and "anarchist" was the only one that seemed to fit. The term "anarchist" has been applied to a wide variety of attitudes and about the only thing these attitudes have in common is opposition to the power of governments and other large organizations. That certainly fits us.

For an organization that pretends to be the world's greatest law-enforcement agency, the FBI seems surprisingly incompetent. They can't even keep elementary facts straight. Many news reports based on information provided by the FBI are incorrect and even contradict each other. Maybe some of these errors and contradictions are the result of journalists' mistakes, but it appears that most are the fault of the FBI.

Examples: It was reported that the bomb that killed Gilbert Murray was a pipe bomb. It was not a pipe bomb but was set off by a home made detonating cap. (The FBI's so-called experts should have been able to determine this quickly and easily, especially since we indicated in an unpublished part of our last letter to the NY Times that the majority of our bombs are no longer pipe bombs.) It was also reported that the address label on this same bomb gave the name of the California Forestry Association incorrectly. This is false. The name was given correctly.

The FBI's theory that we have some kind of a fascination with wood is about as silly as it can get. They apparently base this theory mainly on the fact that we've used a lot of wood in the construction of bomb packages, and several of our targets have lived on streets

that are named after trees or have names that include words like "wood," etc. As for our use of wood in construction, what other material is so light, so easy to work and so readily available in large chunks (such as a 2x4) from which suitable pieces can be cut? One FBI agent mentioned in support of the wood theory that we had used wood to make parts that could have been made out of ~~xxx~~ metal. But why use metal where wood can be used? Wood is much lighter and much easier to work. One of the reasons why we use wooden rather than cardboard boxes for mail bombs is that cardboard boxes crush easily and rough handling in the mail could cause damage to trigger mechanisms, possibly resulting in premature detonation. As for our use of "exotic" woods, we've used hickory from old tool handles, and we recognized redwood from its color, but apart from that we usually don't even know what kind of wood we are working with since we just use pieces of scrap lumber that we pick up here and there. As for the "polished" wood, it was only sanded. We sanded the outside of wooden boxes to remove saw marks so that the packages would have a smooth, factory-made appearance, less likely to arouse suspicion. Some inside parts were sanded to remove possible fingerprints. Since wood is porous sweat from the fingers probably penetrates the surface a short distance, so we assume ~~xx~~ that merely wiping wood does not reliably remove fingerprints. Some metal parts also were scrubbed with sandpaper or emery paper for a similar reason. It is well known that old fingerprints on metal can sometimes be brought out by treating with acid, so presumably the sweat affects the surface of the metal chemically and merely wiping is probably not a reliable method of removing prints. As for the street named after trees, wood etc., that's only chance. Just check a street map of any suburban area and see how many of the street names include as a component either the name of some species of tree or a word such as "wood," "forest," "arbor," "grove" etc. The FBI must really be getting desperate if ~~they~~ they resort to theories as ridiculous as this one about the supposed fascination with wood.

What about the morality of revolutionary violence? To the extent that the word "morality" refers to a code of behavior laid down by society, it is senseless to apply moral criteria to the actions of revolutionaries. Each society prescribes a system of morality that is designed to preserve the existence and facilitate the functioning of that society. Since revolutionaries work to overthrow the society in which they live, they have no reason to abide by its moral code. Of course, those who want to preserve the society always regard the revolutionaries as immoral.

But the word "morality" might also refer to consideration for others as motivated by sympathy or compassion (which exist independently of any socially prescribed code). In this sense one can ask about the morality of revolutionary violence. Do the revolutionaries' goals outweigh the harm they cause to others? Do the people they hurt "deserve" it?

Such questions can be answered only on a subjective basis, and we don't think it is necessary for us to do any public soul-searching in this letter. But we will say that we are not insensitive to the pain caused by our bombings.

A bomb package that we mailed to computer scientist Patrick Fischer injured his secretary when she opened it. We certainly regret that. When we were young and comparatively reckless we were much more

careless in selecting targets than we are now. For instance, in one case we attempted unsuccessfully to blow up an airliner. The idea was to kill a lot of business people who we assumed would constitute the majority of the passengers. But of course some of the passengers likely would have been innocent people - maybe kids, or some working stiff going to see his sick grandmother. We're glad now that that attempt failed.

But even though we would undo some of the things we did in earlier days, or do them differently, we are convinced that our enterprise is basically right. The industrial-technological system has got to be eliminated, and to us almost any means that may be necessary for that purpose are justified, even if they involve risk to innocent people. As for the people who wilfully and knowingly promote economic growth and technical progress, in our eyes they are criminals, and if they get blown up they deserve it.

Of course, people don't kill others and risk their own lives just from a detached conviction that a certain change should be made in society. They have to be motivated by some strong emotional force. What is the motivating force in our case? The answer is simple: Anger. You'll ask why we are so angry. You would do better to ask why there is so much anger and frustration in modern society generally. We think that our manuscript gives the answer to that question, or at least an important part of the answer.

We encourage you to print this letter, but we don't require it as part of the condition for our promise to desist from terrorism.

FC

P.S. We want to add a qualification to our (temporary) grant of exclusive rights to whoever publishes our manuscript. We are sending copies of the manuscript to several other parties besides the NY Times. We want everyone to whom we have sent a copy to have the right to make a small number (say 5) of copies of their copy, for personal use or for private circulation.

FC

Dr. Tyler:

This is a message from FC. The FBI calls us "unabom." We read a newspaper article in which you commented on recent bombings, including ours, as an indication of social problems. We are sending you a copy of a manuscript that we hope the New York Times will get published for us.

The trouble with psychologists is that in commenting on what people say or do they often concentrate exclusively on the non-rational motivations behind the speech or behavior. But human behavior has a rational as well as an irrational component, and psychologists should not neglect the rational component. So if you take the trouble to read our manuscript and do any further thinking about the "unabom" case, we suggest that you should not only consider our actions as a symptom of social or psychological problems; you should also give attention to the substance of the issues that we raise in the manuscript. You might ask yourself, for example, the following questions:

Do you think we are likely to be right, in a general way, about the kind of future that technology is creating for the human race?

If you think we are wrong, then why do you think so? How would you answer our arguments? Can you sketch a PLAUSIBLE scenario for a future technological society that does not have the negative characteristics indicated by our scenarios?

If you think we are likely to be right about the future, do you consider that kind of future acceptable? If not, then what, if anything, do you think can be done about it?

Do you think our analysis of PRESENT social problems is approximately correct? If not, why not? How would you answer our arguments?

If you think we have identified some present social problems correctly, do you think anything can be done about them? Will they get better or worse with continued growth and progress?

We apologize for sending you such a poor carbon copy of our manuscript. We can't make copies at a public copy machine because people would get suspicious if they saw us handling our copies with gloves.

FC

June 28, 1995

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INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY AND ITS FUTURE

by FC

The manuscript is 68 pages long, an argument structured as a proof.
A section titled THE FUTURE discusses the inevitable evolution of artificial intelligence.
It is published in full as a supplement to The Washington Post on September 19, 1995.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The industrial revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race. They have greatly increased the life-expectancy of those of us who live in "advanced" countries, but they have destabilized society, have made life unfulfilling, have subjected human beings to indignities, have led to widespread psychological suffering (in the Third World to physical suffering as well) and have inflicted severe damage on the natural world. The continued development of technology will worsen the situation. It will certainly subject human beings to greater indignities and inflict greater damage on the natural world, it will probably lead to greater social disruption and psychological suffering, and it may lead to increased physical suffering even in "advanced" countries.

2. The industrial-technological system may survive or it may break down. If it survives, it MAY eventually achieve a low level of physical and psychological suffering, but only after passing through a long and very painful period of adjustment and only at the cost of permanently reducing human beings and many other living organisms to engineered products and mere cogs in the social machine. Furthermore, if the system survives, the consequences will be inevitable: there is no way of reforming or modifying the system so as to prevent it from depriving people of dignity and autonomy.

3. If the system breaks down the consequences will still be very painful. But the bigger the system grows the more disastrous the results of its breakdown will be, so if it is to break down it had best break down sooner rather than later.

4. We therefore advocate a revolution against the industrial system. This revolution may or may not make use of violence; it may be sudden or it may be a relatively gradual process spanning a few decades. We can't predict any of that. But we do outline in a very general way the measures that those who hate the industrial system should take in order to prepare the way for a revolution against that form of society. This is not to be a POLITICAL revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.

5. In this article we give attention to only some of the negative developments that have grown out of the industrial-technological system. Other such developments we mention only briefly or ignore altogether. This does not mean that we regard these other developments as unimportant. For practical reasons we have to confine our discussion to areas that have received insufficient public attention or in which we have something new to say. For example, since there are well developed environmental and wilderness movements we have written very little about environmental degradation or the destruction of wild nature, even though we consider these to be highly important.

Page 1 [abstract]

The next chapter begins.

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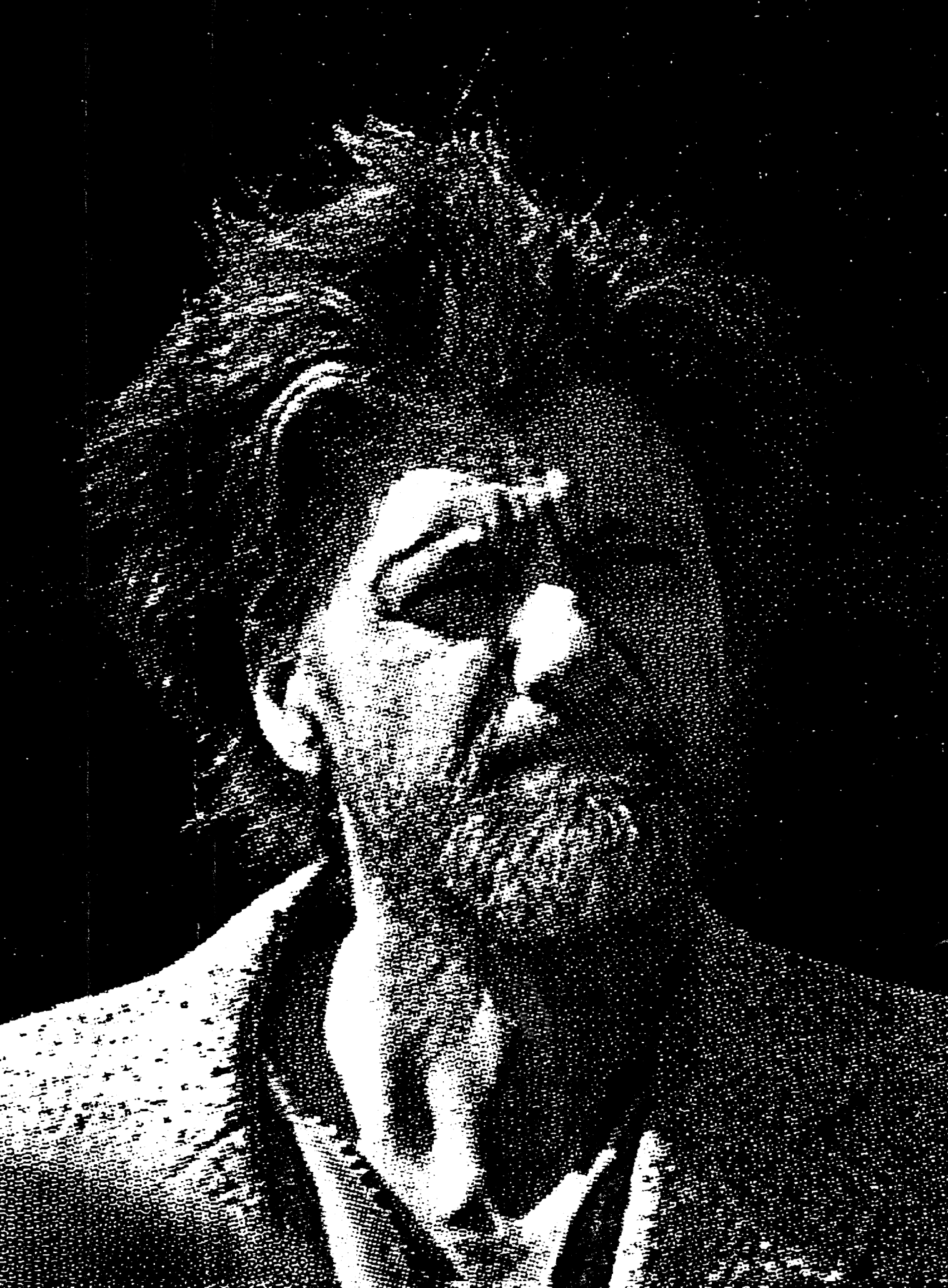
FBI